

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 1728

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, PINT, IT

SUBJECT: DC LEADER DECAROLIS ON POLITICAL ECONOMIC SITUATION.

MEMCON MASSIMO DE CAROLIS, MILAN DC LEADER AND CONGEN, MILAN, SEP 19,
75.

1. DE CAROLIS JUST BACK FROM HIGH LEVEL DC MEETINGS IN ROME. SAID
THAT PARTY DIVIDING INTO TWO MAIN CAMPS. MAJORITY BACKING FORLANI AS
DC SECRETARY WITH ANDREOTTI AS PM INCLUDES PICCOLIC AND BISAGLIA.
MINORITY LED BY MORO SUPPORTED BY RUMOR AND EMILIO COLOMBO.

2. DE CAROLIS FRIENDS, WHO ARE FORLANI GROUP, ENCOURAGED BY SIGNS
RENEWED US COMMITMENT IN ITALY REFLECTED IN AMBASSADOR VOPES
EPOCA INTERVIEW AND IMPORTANT IMMEDIATE ENDORSEMENT BY WASHINGTON.
AMBS THRUST AT UNSETTLING EAST-WEST BALANCE AND DETENTE A VITAL AND
VERY TELLING POINT. MOREOVER, DE CAROLIS DETECTS SIGNIFICANT SIGNS OF
PSI DISCOMFORT WITH COMMUNIST ALLIANCE WHICH HE THINKS WORKING TO
FAVOR PSI AUTONOMISTS. HE FAVOR DELAYING NATIONAL ELECTIONS
UNTIL 1977 TO ALLOW THIS TENSION TO MAXIMIZE.

3. IN MILAN HE CLAIMS SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS ALREADY IN HASSLE
OVER
BUILDING PERMITS.

4. MONTEDISON, (ON BOARD OF WHICH DECAROLIS SITS) MEANWHILE SEES
DARK ECONOMIC FUTURE. EXPECTS LOSE SOME 400 BILLION LIRE THIS YEAR.
MONTEDISON DIVIDED ON READING US ECONOMIC TEA LEAVES BUT MAJORITY
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(AND CEFIS) LEAN TO VIEW THAT US ALREADY ON UPSWING AND THEIR FUTURE

DEPENDS ON US RECOVERY.

5. APPEARANCE OF NEW DAILY REPUBBLICA WELCOME NEWS TO DE CAROLIS. HE SAYS IT WILL FILL IMPORTANT NEED FOR LEFT CENTER, NON-COMMUNIST LAY PRESS. ACCORDING TO HIM, COMMUNISTS VERY UNHAPPY AT PROSPECT ITS ISSUANCE WHILE CORRIERE EQUALLY WORRIED SINCE IT WILL BE DIRECT COMPETITOR. ENI'S LEFT WING MILAN DAILY GIORNO BOTH BEING HURT AND HELPED. REPUBBLICA STEALING ITS BEST STAFF AND WILL BE TOUGH COMPETITOR. BUT, IN RECOMPENSE, LOSS OF STAFF HELPS GIORNO WHICH NOW OVER STAFFED. AS FOR FINANCING, DE CAROLIS SAID CARACCIOLO NOT WEALTHY ENOUGH TO BE EVEN HALF ANGEL SO HE ASSUMES THAT OTHER JET SET FRIENDS ARE PITCHING IN-INCLUDING ROVELLI.

6. TURNING TO COMMONIONE E LIBERAZIONE MOVEMENT, DE CAROLIS SEES IT AS DISRUPTIVE ELEMENT. DC CAN'T VERY WELL TURN AWAY YOUNG ACTIVISTS. BUT NEITHER CAN PARTY ALLOW ITSELF TO BE TURNED INTO RIGID CATHOLIC PARTY. THAT WOULD BE SUICIDE FOR DC WHICH WOULD FIND ITSELF REDUCED TO 10 PERCENT OF VOTERS. ON CONTRARY, DE CAROLIS ARGUED, DC MUST STRENGTHEN ITS LAY CHARACTER AND ITS TIES WITH LAY PARTIES IF IT IS TO REMAIN MASS PARTY. DAY OF A CATHOLIC PARTY QUA CATHOLIC PARTY, HE INSISTED, IS OVER IN ITALY. HE WAS NOT SURE VATICAN FULLY REALIZED THIS AND WAS DISTURBED THAT VATICAN WAS ENDORSING COMUNIONE AND LIBERAZIONE. THAT CERTAINLY NOT THE CASE FOR CARDINAL COLOMBO IN MILAN, HE SAID. CARDINAL WANTED C&L TO REMAIN IN CHURCH COMMUNITY AND NOT TRY TO REPLACE POLITICAL PARTY.

7. ON WHOLE, DE CAROLIS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT POLITICAL FUTURE ALTHOUGH HE THINKS THAT TIGHT PASSAGE WILL BE NEXT FIVE YEARS. IF ITALIAN DEMOCRACY CAN SQUEEZE THROUGH, COMMUNISM SHOULD BE CONTAINABLE. WHILE CHANCES IMPROVED BY COMMUNIST SET-BACK IN PORTUGUAL AND US SUCCESS IN MIDDLE EAST, MUCH STILL DEPENDS ON YUGOSLAVIA AND SPAIN. BEST OF EXTERNAL SCENARIOS, HOWEVER, LEAVE ITALIAN INTERNAL OUTLOOK POOR BET, IN HIS ESTIMATION. BUT HE INTENDS TO FIGHT COMMUNIST TAKE OVER TO LAST CARD. IF THEY TAKE THE TRICK, HE HAS AN INDEFINITE US VISA AND WILL KNOW HOW TO USE IT.FINA

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